

NATIONAL DAILY PRESS REVIEW MAY 2-31, 2012

American Embassy's National Daily Press Review

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May 31, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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1. Gbagbo's partisans to be tried
2. Reconciliation commission chairman Charles Konan Banny calls on the press to support the process
3. Armed groups threaten security in Ivorian forested region of Agboville
4. An outbreak of cholera claims the lives of two people in the coastal town of Adiake

1. Gbagbo's partisans to be tried

According to a report in **Soir Info (p. 6)**, the hearing of partisans of former President Laurent Gbagbo, arrested in the wake of his capture last year, will begin today. Citing sources close to the case, the paper noted that Gbagbo's wife Simone and FPI officials Pascal Affi Nguessan and Sokoury Bohui are among those to appear in court for their alleged roles in violence that followed last year's presidential election. These individuals, tagged as Gbagbo's staunchest allies have been in custody and under house arrest in the northern part of the country.

This development came as the hearing next month for former President Laurent Gbagbo, who is awaiting trial at the International Criminal Court in The Hague, continues to trigger comments in the press after ICC prosecutor Luis Moreno Ocampo reportedly handed over to the court evidence against the country's former leader on his role in last year's post electoral violence. A prominent report in **Le Patriote (pp. 2-10)** argued that, in view of the blatant evidence, Gbagbo's fate at the ICC is obviously punitive. This assessment was however rejected by opposition papers, including **Aujourd'hui (pp. 2-5)** which stated that no credit should be given to Mr. Moreno's vain attempt to turn a victim into a culprit. **Le Temps (pp. 4-7)** carried a similar account.

2. Reconciliation commission chairman Charles Konan Banny calls on the press to support the process

The chairman of the Dialogue Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CDVR) Charles Konan Banny recently met with the press to outline the commission's road map. Providing details, **Le Nouveau Reveil (p. 7)** noted that Mr. Konan Banny called on the press to support the task of the commission and to help promote reconciliation by reporting responsibly. According to Mr. Konan Banny, collective efforts are needed for the process to be successful; hence his decision to partner with civil society and non-governmental organizations to achieve tangible results. "Within two years our mission should be over...We are initiating a long-term process which, I hope, will be conclusive," Mr. Banny reportedly said.

3. Armed groups threaten security in Ivorian forested region of Agboville

According to a report in **L'Inter (p. 6)**, the security situation in Cote d'Ivoire remains volatile after rumors of armed bands operating in the forested Agboville region were confirmed by the city's authorities. According to the daily, individuals said to be hostile to the government are reportedly hiding in the forest and plotting to launch a coup. In a bid to avoid direct confrontation with the national army, efforts are underway to monitor the situation, the paper said.

Still on security **Soir Info (p. 16)** noted that AK-47 ammunition and camouflage uniforms were recently found in a textile factory on the outskirts of Yopougon, in northern Abidjan. Investigations, the paper said, are ongoing to shed light on the issue.

4. An outbreak of cholera claims the lives of two people in the coastal town of Adiake

A report in **Nord Sud Quotidien (p. 8)** noted that an outbreak of cholera has been reported in Adiake, a coastal town in eastern Cote d'Ivoire. Citing a report by the World Health Organization (WHO), which sent a team to the site to assess the situation, the paper noted that the epidemic has so far killed two individuals. A total of US \$500,000 is needed to respond to the outbreak, the paper added.

May 30, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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1. President Ouattara to attend AFDB summit in Tanzania
2. A report by ICC prosecutor Ocampo blames former President Laurent Gbagbo for last year's post electoral violence
3. Port of Abidjan equipped with state-of-the art patrol boats
4. State prosecutor Simplicie Kouadio says former Minister Adama Bictogo may face trial despite his parliamentary immunity

5. The fight against child labor

1. President Ouattara to attend AFDB summit in Tanzania

President Alassane Ouattara is in Tanzania to attend the summit of the African Development Bank. The information was reported by **Fraternite Matin (p. 15)**. Welcomed upon his arrival yesterday in Arusha, Tanzania, by his counterpart Jakaya Kikwete and AFDB President Donald Kaberuka, the Ivorian leader pleaded for a timely return of the bank to its Abidjan headquarters. "Security has significantly improved and we are looking forward to seeing the bank back in Abidjan," President Ouattara reportedly said. The Ivorian leader is to deliver an address on the development of the African continent today, the paper added.

In a separate development, the paper noted that ahead of the possible return of the bank to Cote d'Ivoire, a first group of 200 staff members will be dispatched soon. Citing insiders, the paper noted this contingent will serve as a control group to assess the opportunity for the bank to leave its temporary headquarters in Tunisia.

2. A report by ICC prosecutor Ocampo blames former President Laurent Gbagbo for last year's post electoral violence

The prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), Luis Moreno-Ocampo, reportedly handed over to the court in The Hague a 4,000-page report said to contain evidence against former President Laurent Gbagbo for his alleged role in last year's violent post-electoral crisis. The information was reported by **Soir Info (pp. 2-4)** which published excerpts of the document.

However, for opposition papers such as **Le Temps (p. 6)** and **Aujourd'hui (pp. 2-9)** the subject document is nothing but a web of lies, falsehoods and bias. **Le Nouveau Courrier (p. 3)** alleged that, according to Mr. Ocampo, forces loyal to President Ouattara killed at least 2,000 people during their assault to depose former president Laurent Gbagbo, twice the number of victims said to have been caused by Gbagbo loyalists.

3. Port of Abidjan equipped with state-of-the art patrol boats

Maritime security is one of the priorities of the Ivorian port authorities according to **Le Nouveau Reveil (p. 8)** which noted that the Abidjan port has recently been equipped with state-of-the art patrol boats. The paper argued that this equipment will allow port agents to efficiently monitor security along the country's shore and help crack down on piracy, an emerging threat in the region.

Still on security, the Ivorian government recommitted to ensuring military discipline and to putting an end to misdeeds involving army personnel. In a statement read yesterday on **RTI** by military spokesperson Captain Leon Allah Kouakou, the government announced sanctions against rogue military personnel.

4. State prosecutor Simplicie Kouadio says former Minister Adama Bictogo may face trial despite parliamentary immunity

According to State Prosecutor Simplicie Kouadio, former minister Adama Bictogo, who was recently removed following a financial scandal, could be tried despite his immunity as a member of parliament. Speaking in the course of a recent interview with **Fraternite Matin (p. 9)**, Mr. Kouadio noted that pre-trial investigations are underway and, depending on the findings, the National Assembly may be requested to allow Mr. Bictogo to face the court.

5. The fight against child labor

Finally, the commitment of the Ivorian First Lady, Mrs. Dominique Ouattara, to fighting child labor was again reported in ***Fraternité Matin* (p. 7)**. The paper noted that the U.S. chocolate firm Mars recently elaborated a program of community development and education to fight the phenomenon.

May 29, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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- 1.1. President Ouattara meets with interim Malian Prime Minister
- 2.2. Papers say disarmament still remains a major challenge for the Ivorian government
- 3.3. Ivorian journalist union elects new president
- 4.4. Pro-opposition papers criticize the ICC ahead of former president Laurent Gbagbo's trial
- 5.5. The Ivorian First Lady supports U.S. initiatives to fight against child labor

1. President Ouattara meets with interim Malian Prime Minister

According to a report in ***Fraternité Matin* (p. 5)** President Alassane Ouattara met over the weekend with interim Malian Prime Minister Cheick Modibo Diarra. Discussions, the paper said, focused on the crisis raging in northern Mali held by separatists and Islamists. On the occasion, the Malian Premier commended the Ivorian leader who is also the head of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) for initiatives taken to help find a solution to the crisis. This visit, the paper added, came as interim Malian president Dioncounda Traore is in Paris for a medical check-up after he was assaulted in his office by opponents. "I also came to assure President Ouattara that after this attack... an investigation is under way and the culprits will be found and punished according to the law," Mr. Diarra reportedly said.

2. Papers say disarmament still remains a major challenge for the Ivorian government

The issue of the disarmament of former combatants who could not be integrated into the regular defense and security forces remains a hot potato in the hands of the Ivorian government. The information was reported by ***L'Inter* (pp. 4-5)** which argued that a year after the violent post-electoral crisis, the issue has not yet been properly addressed and has even been exacerbated by the proliferation of weapons. According to the daily, the multi-faceted process dubbed DDR (Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration) initially designed for combatants from the 2002 rebellion is now to be extended to include individuals who volunteered to join the Republican Forces in their assault last year to oust former president Laurent Gbagbo, who had refused to cede power. The intricate process, if not properly and promptly addressed could trigger tensions, the paper said, adding that financial difficulties could also hamper the process.

Still on the issue, **Fraternité Matin (p. 5)** noted that according to the Ivorian Minister in charge of Defense, Mr. Paul Koffi Koffi, a new unit tasked with addressing the case of the demobilized soldiers is to be set up soon. The decision aims at streamlining the DDR process, the paper added.

3. Ivorian journalist union elects new president

According to reports in the press today, Mr. Moussa Traore is the new chairman of the Ivorian National Union of Journalists, known as the UNJCI. Providing details, **Soir Info (p. 14)** noted that Mr. Traore, the publisher of the daily newspaper **L'Expression**, secured 61 percent of the votes cast.

4. Pro-opposition papers criticize the ICC ahead of former president Laurent Gbagbo's trial

Scheduled for June 18, the next hearing for former president Laurent Gbagbo, accused of human rights abuses and in custody at the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague, was the subject of reports in pro-opposition papers. According to **Le Temps (p. 5)** the credibility of the ICC is at stake with the trial of the man the paper referred to as the victim of an international plot. The daily argued that the case is plagued with procedural failures.

With a picture of a smiling Laurent Gbagbo, **Notre Voie (pp. 2-3)** noted that the ex-leader is optimistic. Citing insiders who recently met him, the paper said the former president remains upbeat about his trial.

In a separate development, the paper noted that the leadership of the FPI met over the weekend and recommitted to supporting their leader who is awaiting trial at the ICC.

5. The Ivorian First Lady supports U.S. initiatives to fight against child labor

On the initiative of the U.S. cocoa processing firm Mars, a project dubbed "Vision for Change" which advocates actions to fight against child labor has been approved by the National Monitoring Committee against child labor - a task force headed by Ivorian First Lady Dominique Ouattara. The information was reported by **Le Nouveau Reveil (p. 9)** which noted that Mars official Jeff Morgan recommitted the company to fighting the worst forms of child labor and to helping promote development in the cocoa producing regions of the country.

MAY 25, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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1. World Bank declares zero tolerance for corruption and mismanagement in Cote d'Ivoire
2. New developments following the dismissal of a minister over toxic waste dumping scandal
3. Pro-opposition daily calls President Ouattara's one year in power a "disaster"
4. The case of former president Gbagbo and his supporters
5. President Ouattara holds talks with ICC judge
6. President Ouattara orders security forces to track down armed robbers

7. Panel to evaluate the state of the media in Cote d'Ivoire

1. World Bank declares zero tolerance for corruption and mismanagement in Cote d'Ivoire

With a picture of the World Bank director on its front page, *Fraternite Matin* carries a banner headline reading, "Corruption, mismanagement: Zero tolerance." According to the paper (**p. 11**), the World Bank director in Cote d'Ivoire, Madani Tall, stated this yesterday during a ceremony in Abidjan. Tall, who was speaking to project managers, is reported as saying, "You must bear in mind that the sacred rule of the World Bank regarding corruption and mismanagement is zero tolerance." The paper also underscores the timing of Tall's statement made in the wake of the dismissal of a member of the government over a toxic waste dumping scandal.

"Ouattara's methods will change Ivorians," says a prominent headline in *Le Patriote* (**p. 1**) which emphasizes President Ouattara's fight against "impunity" and his commitment to inculcate "good governance" into the habits of the people of Cote d'Ivoire. The paper (**p. 2**) claims that the dismissal of a member of the government this week for alleged embezzlement of money meant to be paid as compensation to the victims of the toxic waste demonstrates the president's commitment to good governance.

2. New developments following the dismissal of a minister over toxic waste dumping scandal

A front-page story in *L'Inter* suggests that after the dismissal of the Minister of African Integration, Adama Bictogo, for alleged embezzlement of money, other government officials could also be targeted by judges investigating the toxic waste dumping scandal. The paper (**p. 3**) also speculates that the dismissal of the minister could bring to the fore other financial scandals that may involve other government officials.

"Was Adama Bictogo arrested?" asks a prominent headline in *L'Intelligent d'Abidjan* (**p. 1**). The paper is reporting on rumors of the arrest of the former minister and quotes law experts as saying that to arrest Mr. Bictogo, who enjoys parliamentary immunity and other privileges vested in him as a former minister, judges will have to overcome many obstacles. Meanwhile, *Nord-Sud Quotidien* carries a front-page headline announcing that Kone Cheick Oumar, another top official allegedly implicated in the toxic waste dumping scandal, will be arrested.

3. Pro-opposition daily calls President Ouattara's one year in power a "disaster"

Assessing the government's performance, *Notre Voie* carries a front-page banner headline calling President Ouattara's one year of stewardship "a disaster." To vindicate this assertion, the paper carries other front-page headlines reading, "Ivorians are at the mercy of the FRCI and Dozos;" "Rocketing prices of food commodities;" "Vuvuzela-style diplomacy;" "Zero score for reconciliation" and "Education in a mess." The paper (**pp. 4 & 5**) also carries other stories with headlines denouncing what it sees as Cote d'Ivoire's "shameful dependence" on France and the justice system under President Ouattara's regime, which it says is "neither impartial nor securing nor reliable."

4. The case of former president Gbagbo and his supporters

According to a front-page headline in **Notre Voie**, 100 French soldiers are expected in Abidjan ahead of former president Laurent Gbagbo's hearing at the International Criminal Court on June 18. The paper (**p. 5**) attributes this information to a source close to Cote d'Ivoire's embassy in Paris.

Regarding Gbagbo's June 18 hearing at The Hague, a report in **Le Nouveau Reveil (p. 3)** says that the procedure could take five days.

On the case of the supporters of the former president who have been detained for different crimes allegedly committed during the post-electoral violence in Cote d'Ivoire, **L'Intelligent d'Abidjan (p. 5)** announces that some of them will be questioned by investigators on June 29. The paper mentions the president of Gbagbo's FPI party, Pascal Affi N'Guessan and Gilbert Ake N'Gbo, a former prime minister, as those who could appear before the judges.

In another development, a front-page story in **L'Inter** says that the release of the lawyer of former first lady Simone Gbagbo, who is detained in a prison in Abidjan, has been aborted as a result of a misunderstanding between the judge hearing the case and the state prosecutor.

5. President Ouattara holds talks with ICC judge

"The victims have the right to justice," **Fraternite Matin (p. 4)** quotes ICC judge Silvana Arbia as saying after a meeting with President Ouattara yesterday in Abidjan. The judge is also reported as saying that "the ICC is ready to assure that justice is provided." Speaking on the ICC's decision to open a bureau in Abidjan, Arbia said: "The objective is to bring the court closer to the communities that were victims of the crimes that fall under the jurisdiction of the court and the sensitize them."

6. President Ouattara orders security forces to track down armed robbers

An article in **Soir Info (p. 3)** says that President Ouattara has ordered the military high command to disarm all those who are holding arms illegally in order restore full security throughout the country. The president, who is also the minister of defense, has also instructed the security forces to track down armed robbers and anybody threatening the country's security.

Meanwhile, a prominent headline in **Le Nouveau Courrier (p. 1)** says that "Burkinabe mercenaries are threatening Ouattara." The article (**p. 3**) claims that the so-called mercenaries were recruited during the 2010-2011 political crisis in Cote d'Ivoire to back the Forces Republicaines de Cote d'Ivoire (FRCI), the army that was created by President Ouattara to fight soldiers loyal to the former president.

7. Panel to evaluate the state of the media in Cote d'Ivoire

A report in **Fraternite Matin (p. 13)** says that the Minister of Communication, Souleimane Diakite Coty, has launched a government-backed program designed to evaluate the state of the media in Cote d'Ivoire. "The objective of this program is to take stock of obstacles hindering the development of the national media," the paper quotes the minister as saying yesterday in Abidjan. A steering committee has been put in place and has been tasked to come out with solutions to heal these problems.

MAY 24, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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- 1.The International Criminal Court to open a bureau in Abidjan
- 2.Reactions following the dismissal of a minister over toxic waste dumping scandal
- 3.Interior Minister vows to track down armed robbers
- 4.Former Chief of Defense Staff appointed as an ambassador
- 5.Nominations of new heads of media regulatory bodies
- 6.No increase in consumer electricity price in Cote d'Ivoire
- 7.Problems facing cocoa and coffee farmers

1. The International Criminal Court to open a bureau in Abidjan

A prominent story in **Fraternite Matin (P. 1)** announces the opening of a bureau of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in Abidjan. According to the paper (**p. 4**) the announcement was made yesterday by ICC judge Silvana Arbia after a meeting with Ivorian Prime Minister Jeannot Ahoussou Kouadio, who is also the Minister of Justice in the current administration. The newspaper also notes that the decision came just before the second appearance of former president Laurent Gbagbo before the ICC in The Hague in connection with crimes committed during the recent post-electoral violence in Cote d'Ivoire. "The opening of this bureau has become necessary in order to guarantee an efficient cooperation between the national authorities and other key players," the paper quotes Arbia as saying. "The bureau," the ICC's judge is also reported as saying, "will help the ICC to fully execute its mandate independently and impartially in Cote d'Ivoire."

"The ICC comes to the rescue of Gbagbo's victims," says a prominent headline in **Le Patriote (p. 1)**. "We're working to help victims have access to justice," the paper quotes the ICC judge as saying. "The ICC is to open a special tribunal in Cote d'Ivoire three weeks before Gbagbo's trial," says a banner headline in **L'Inter (p. 1)**.

With more on judiciary issues in Cote d'Ivoire, a front-page headline in **L'Inter** says that the mother of Michel Gbagbo, the son of the former Ivorian president, has called for the transfer of her son, who is being detained in connection with recent post-electoral violence in Cote d'Ivoire, to France. "I want him to be transferred to France since he is also a French citizen," the paper (**p. 7**) quotes a letter sent by Michel Gbagbo's mother to French President Francois Hollande. "Michel Gbagbo detained for 14 months without trial: his mother lodges a complaint," reads a front-page headline in **Notre Voie**.

2. Reactions following the dismissal of a minister over toxic waste dumping scandal

"The decision by the President of the Republic to terminate the function of the Minister of African Integration, Adama Bictogo is conforming to the president's commitment to good governance," a report in **Fraternite Matin (p. 5)** quotes government spokesperson Bruno Kone as saying after the Council of Ministers meeting yesterday in Abidjan. "It is also to make sure that government officials are relieved of duty in order to respond to the justice system when they are involved in judiciary matters," Kone is also quoted as saying. Still on the same issue, the paper quotes the prime minister who warned that "any act that is likely to jeopardize public interests will be punished."

The decision by President Alassane Ouattara to dismiss the minister was taken following continuous protest marches organized by victims of the toxic waste that was dumped Abidjan in August 2006, writes **Notre Voie (p. 7)**. The article also claims that the former African Integration minister and two other persons have embezzled nearly 4.7 billion FCFA (about US \$9 million), money meant to be paid as compensation to the victims of the toxic waste.

3. Interior Minister vows to track down armed robbers

"Go and track down the bandits," a front-page headline in **Nord-Sud Quotidien** quotes Interior Minister Hamed Bakayoko as telling police officers. A report in this paper (**p. 5**) says that the minister said this yesterday in Abidjan when he presented equipment to the police.

4. Former Chief of Defense Staff appointed as an ambassador

General Philippe Mangou, the chief of defense staff under the previous government, has been appointed as Cote d'Ivoire's ambassador to Gabon, says a front-page story in **Fraternite Matin**. According to the paper, Mangou's nomination was confirmed yesterday during the Council of Ministers meeting presided over by President Ouattara.

5. Nominations of new heads of media regulatory bodies

According to a statement issued yesterday after the Council of Ministers meeting, the government has also appointed new heads of the state-run media regulatory bodies, reports **Le Patriote (p. 3)**. The statement said that the new president of High Authority for Audiovisual Communication (HACA) is Mr. Raphael Lakpe, while Mr. Rene Bourgois is the new head of National Press Council (CNP). The statement also said that Mr. Lazare Aka-Saye, former interim managing director of the state-owned broadcaster RTI, has been confirmed as the company's new manager.

"Ouattara appoints RDR hardliner to replace Eugene Kacou as the head of the CNP," says an article in **Notre Voie (p. 9)**. According to the paper, "Lakpe, a supporter of the RDR party, was a journalist with the Le Patriote." "It's a key man who hates Laurent Gbagbo and the press supporting him who is now chairing an institution whose undemocratic and partisan practices have come under criticism," writes the paper.

6. No increase in consumer electricity prices in Cote d'Ivoire

"Consumer prices for gas and electricity will not change," says a front-page headline in **Le Nouveau Reveil**. The paper attributes this statement to the Minister of Economy and Finance, Charles Koffi Diby and Adama Toungara, the Minister of Mining, Petrol and Energy.

7. Problems facing cocoa and coffee farmers

"The distress of cocoa and coffee farmers," says a front-page headline in **Fraternite Matin**. The problems facing the farmers range from low prices to a poor flow of their products, the paper quotes them as narrating during a visit by the Minister of Agriculture in the south-western region.

MAY 23, 2012

Today's Top Stories

1. President Ouattara sacks a minister over toxic waste dumping scandal
2. Visit of the UN Security Council to Cote d'Ivoire
3. Ivorian government takes new measures to monitor security
4. ECOWAS negotiator briefs President Ouattara on the situation in Mali

1. President Ouattara sacks a minister over toxic waste dumping scandal

"Adama Bictogo swept away by the toxic waste scandal," says a prominent headline in **Fraternite Matin (p. 1)**. The paper (**p. 4**) published a decree signed yesterday by President Ouattara "terminating the function of the Minister of African Integration, Adama Bictogo." The paper also carries on its front page a photo of the Probo Koala, the ship that dumped toxic waste in Abidjan in August 2006 with a headline reading "Probo Koala takes another victim."

On the reason behind President Ouattara's decision to sack the minister, **Fraternite Matin (p. 4)** discloses that the minister tendered a letter of resignation that was accepted by the president. The article further explains that the minister's intention was "to get rid of any official title" in order to appear before the judges investigating the scandal relating to the dumping of toxic waste in Abidjan. The paper also explains that the toxic waste scandal has resurfaced following an article published recently in the French news magazine Jeune Afrique that quoted an eyewitness accusing the Minister of African Integration of accepting money meant to be paid as compensation to the victims of the toxic waste.

Another article in **Fraternite Matin (p. 4)** recalls President Ouattara's warning "to dismiss any government official who violates the code of ethics or is suspected of any wrongdoing." The article also quotes the code of good governance signed by Ivorian ministers before assuming duty; adding that by sacking the minister President Ouattara wants "to remain faithful to his words." After Adama Bictogo, "who is the next on the list?" asks another article on the same page of this paper.

"Ouattara has begun the cleaning," says a prominent headline in **Nord-Sud Quotidien (p. 1)** which encourages President Ouattara to continue the exercise. "Who is the next on list?" asks the paper (**p. 2**) which quotes observers applauding the president for his "act of courage." The paper, which claims to have gauged the mood of ordinary people in town following the president's decision, says that Ivorians were "relieved" by the announcement as it conforms to their "expectations to see good governance take root" in Cote d'Ivoire.

Soir Info (p. 3) hails the Ivorian leader for taking "a great" step at the same time he is being accused of "not being firm enough with the government officials or protecting them." After sacking his minister, the president has earned "a good grade," comments **L'Inter (p. 4)** which carries on saying that the president should continue his battle against "impunity."

Le Patriote (p. 1) carries the first reaction of the former minister who said: "I want the truth and those responsible to be identified." A front-page headline in **L'Intelligent d'Abidjan** wonders whether Adama Bictogo was just "a victim" or "guilty." With the dismissal of the minister of African Integration, the paper (**p. 5**) believes that the president has opened a "Pandora's Box," adding that "other heavyweights are likely to lose their jobs." The article suggests that the turn of events in the toxic waste scandal has brought to light President Ouattara's method of governance, which, it says,

consists of “not succumbing to pressure or listening to rumors but rather listening to the voices of ordinary people.”

Le Nouveau Reveil (pp. 2 & 3) publishes the whole story by Jeune Afrique which, it says, led to the dismissal of the minister. The paper also carries pictures of another four persons who, it says, are allegedly involved in the toxic waste scandal.

In the wake of the dismissal of the minister over the toxic waste scandal, **Le Nouveau Courrier (p. 1)** describes the president’s decision as “a comedy.” “Will Adama Bictogo, whose financial powers and capacity to intimidate people are known, be held in custody as prescribed the law?” asks the paper **(p. 5)** which calls for the bank accounts of the former minister both at home and abroad to be frozen in connection with the investigation. The paper also claims that other government officials are involved in many scandals.

2. Visit of the UN Security Council to Cote d’Ivoire

“There are many challenges ahead including the completion of the disarmament, disbandment and reintegration program,” an article in **Fraternite Matin (p. 6)** quotes President Ouattara as telling a delegation from the UN Security Council visiting Cote d’Ivoire. The president, the report says, also mentioned “the reconciliation process, security at the country’s borders, reinforcement of the security of people and goods,” among others, as the other challenges. Another report on the same page of this paper announces that the UN mission in Cote d’Ivoire is to open a bureau in the western town of Guiglo. According to the paper, the announcement was made during a visit by the UN Security Council delegation to this region.

3. Ivorian government takes new measures to monitor security

“Paul Koffi Koffi declares war on the FRCI and Dozos,” says a report in **Le Nouveau Courrier (p. 5)**. According to the paper, the Minister in charge of Defense, Paul Koffi Koffi, met yesterday with the army commanders in a bid to find solutions to the “anarchy” in the Ivorian army. “Whether they are Dozos, militia groups or civilians who are carrying guns, we’re going to be tough with them,” the paper quotes the minister as saying.

“Exiled soldiers, militiamen and Dozos have one month to lay down their arms,” says a headline in **Nord-Sud Quotidien (p. 3)**. The paper, which attributed this statement to the minister in charge of defense, also reports that the minister has instructed military commanders to come out with the exact number elements forming the national army by June 30.

Meanwhile, a front-page report in **L’Inter** says that a score of persons were killed in western Cote d’Ivoire after gunmen attacked Dahoua, a village located in the region.

4. ECOWAS negotiator briefs President Ouattara on the situation in Mali

A report in **Fraternite Matin (p. 5)** says that the Chairman of the ECOWAS Commission, Kadre Ouedraogo, yesterday briefed President Ouattara on the situation in Mali. According to the paper, the ECOWAS negotiator briefed the president following a meeting he had with Mali’s key stakeholders. “We have assurances that the ECOWAS-inspired transition deal will be accepted and respected by all the stakeholders,” the paper quotes Ouedraogo as saying.

MAY 22, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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1. New mandate for UN forces in Cote d'Ivoire at the top of talks between the UN Security Council and Ivorian authorities
2. The security situation in Cote d'Ivoire
3. UN Security Council calls for another solution to resolve the crisis in Mali
4. U.S.-Cote d'Ivoire relations

1. New mandate for UN forces in Cote d'Ivoire at the top of talks between the UN Security Council and Ivorian authorities

A front-page headline in **Fraternite Matin** says that the reform of the United Nations Operation in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI) was high on the agenda yesterday during a meeting between members of the UN Security Council and Ivorian authorities. An article in this paper (**p. 2**) quotes French Ambassador to the UN Gerard Eraud as saying that "the UN is considering shifting its role from military to development" in Cote d'Ivoire. Ambassador Eraud, who was speaking after a meeting with President Alassane Ouattara, pledged the UN's support to Cote d'Ivoire and hailed "the Ivorian government and the authorities for their courage and dignity in resolving the bloody crisis that they were confronted with." "The UN is committed to helping Cote d'Ivoire to face the challenges of normalization of the situation and economic revival," Ambassador Eraud is also reported as saying.

In a separate story, **Fraternite Matin** (**p. 3**) considers the need to lift the UN arms embargo that has been imposed on Cote d'Ivoire since 2004 following political violence in this country.

With a photo of U.S. Ambassador to the UN Susan Rice on its front-page, **L'Intelligent d'Abidjan** carries a prominent headline reading, "Here are the secrets behind the UN Security Council's mission in Cote d'Ivoire." An article in this paper (**p. 7**) suggests that the main purpose of the UN Security Council's visit to Cote d'Ivoire was to encourage the government and the opposition to dialogue in a bid to sustain "a durable peace" after the post-electoral crisis in this country.

Another article on the same page of **L'Intelligent d'Abidjan** says that the opposition FPI party hardened its position when a delegation from the party met with the UN Security Council yesterday in Abidjan. "We're still living in a state of no law because, not only are the Dozos imposing their laws, they are also expropriating farmers' land in the west," the paper quotes the party as saying.

In a related development, **L'Inter** carries a front-page headline saying that the FPI is pushing the UN Security Council to pass a resolution for the release of former president Laurent Gbagbo. An article in this paper (**p. 4**) also suggests that Gbagbo's party is demanding the release of all of war prisoners, an amnesty law for the supporters of the former president living in exile and the unfreezing of their assets.

2. The security situation in Cote d'Ivoire

One person was left dead as traditional hunters, widely known as Dozos, clashed with the population in the central town Ouaragahio, reports **L'Inter (p. 3)**. According to the paper, the incident occurred over the weekend.

3. UN Security Council calls for other options to resolve the crisis in Mali

A front-page story in **Le Nouveau Reveil** quotes the UN Security Council as saying that "the mediation process in Mali is in danger," after angry protestors assaulted interim President Dioncounda Traore. "Maybe other options will now have to be considered," the paper quotes French Ambassador Gerard Eraud as saying in Abidjan. The paper, which describes the attack on the interim president as "unacceptable and intolerable," quotes Ivorian Foreign Affairs Minister Daniel Kablan Duncan as saying that "ECOWAS will not accept this situation."

4. U.S.-Cote d'Ivoire relations

Cote d'Ivoire will participate in the 11th Annual Forum of Commercial and Economic Cooperation between the United States and African countries scheduled from June 10 to June 23, 2012 in Washington, **Soir Info (p. 8)** quotes a government official as saying. The statement also says that "Cote d'Ivoire's eligibility for AGOA will enable the country to export products to the U.S. market duty-free and will help harness partnerships between American and international investors," reports the paper.

MAY 21, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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- 1.The visit by the UN Security Council to Cote d'Ivoire
- 2.President Ouattara's statement on the state of the country
- 3.Upcoming regional and local elections likely to be coupled
- 4.Pro-opposition newspaper suspended
- 5.Mali coup leaders accept transition deal proposed by ECOWAS

1. The visit by the UN Security Council to Cote d'Ivoire

A report in **Fraternite Matin (p. 5)** says that a 15-member delegation from the UN Security Council is currently visiting Cote d'Ivoire as part of a three-nation tour of West Africa. The delegation arrived yesterday in Abidjan and will be travelling to Liberia and Sierra Leone. The visit will allow the members of the UN Security Council to assess progress made by the authorities in Cote d'Ivoire of reforms in areas such as security, disarmament, demobilization and the reinsertion of former combatants. The humanitarian situation and the reconciliation process launched almost a year ago by

the Ivorian government will also be high on the agenda during meetings between the delegation and the country's authorities.

"Susan Rice and a delegation from the UN Security Council arrived in Abidjan yesterday," reads a story in **L'Intelligent d'Abidjan (p. 3)**. According to the paper, the 15-member delegation, which is led by the U.S. Ambassador to the UN, Susan Rice, will be holding talks with the Ivorian authorities on the security situation in Cote d'Ivoire since the end of the post-electoral crisis in this country. Reporting on the same issue, **Nord-Sud Quotidien (p. 2)** quotes the Togolese Ambassador to the UN, Kojo Menan, as saying, "The aim of this mission is to first assess efforts being deployed by the government in promoting peace and democracy after the sad events that the country went through."

A report in **Le Nouveau Reveil (p. 5)** says that Ivorian Foreign Affairs Minister Daniel Kablan Duncan has appealed to the UN Security Council to lift the arms embargo imposed on Cote d'Ivoire. According to the paper, Duncan made the appeal yesterday during a meeting with the members of the council. The minister is reported as saying that the delegation will also meet with opposition groups and representatives of civic groups.

2. President Ouattara's statement on the state of the country

President Alassane Ouattara's statement on the state of the country one year after he took the reins of power is the subject of a prominent story in **Fraternite Matin**. "There has been change" in Cote d'Ivoire, the president is reported as saying. According to the paper (**pp. 2 & 3**), President Ouattara was interviewed by French international broadcaster RFI over the weekend. "You're impatient but I will keep my promises," a front-page headline in **Le Patriote** quotes President Ouattara as assuring Ivorians. On the case of former Ivorian president Laurent Gbagbo, who is currently facing trial in The Hague for alleged crimes committed during the recent political crisis in Cote d'Ivoire, the paper (**pp. 2 & 3**) reports President Ouattara as saying, "Laurent Gbagbo deserves to be where he is."

3. Upcoming regional and local elections likely to be coupled

A front-page story in **Fraternite Matin** says that the government has decided to couple upcoming regional and local elections. A report (**p. 4**) in this paper says that preparations for the next regional and local elections were high on the agenda during a meeting that brought together Prime Minister Jeannot Ahoussou Kouadio and other key ministers over the weekend. Reporting on the same issue, **L'Inter (p. 5)** informs readers that new communes and sub-districts are to be announced by the government ahead of the regional and local elections. "All the sub-districts will become communes," says a front-page headline in **Le Nouveau Reveil**. According to the paper (**p. 5**), the decision was taken over the weekend by the government after a seminar on the upcoming regional and local elections.

4. Pro-opposition newspaper suspended

A report in **Fraternite Matin (p. 22)** says that Notre Voie, a pro-opposition daily newspaper has been suspended for four days by the CNP, the state print media regulatory body. According to the paper, the decision has been taken following a story published by the paper in its May 12-13, 2012 edition in which the paper carried a picture of former Ivorian president Laurent Gbagbo with a caption reading, "HEM Laurent Gbagbo, President of the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire toppled by the UN-France coalition on April 11th 2011." The decision states that "presenting Laurent Gbagbo as the President of the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire and, moreover, toppled by a UN-France coalition constitutes a distortion of facts."

Reporting on the suspension of Notre Voie, **Le Nouveau Courrier (p. 1)** in its weekend edition described the CNP as “a Sword of Damocles hanging over the press.”

5. Mali coup leaders accept transition deal proposed by ECOWAS

A report in **Fraternite Matin (p. 26)** announces that Mali’s coup leaders have finally accepted Dioncounda Traore as the transitional president beyond today’s deadline. According to the paper, the decision was the result of protracted negotiations led by the West African regional bloc ECOWAS in Abidjan over the weekend. Also as part of the deal, coup leader Captain Amadou Sanogo will get all the benefits of a former head of state, report the paper.

MAY 18, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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1. ECOWAS Council to meet today in Abidjan
2. Results of the Council of Ministers meeting
3. Group of 21 gendarmes charged again
4. Laurent Gbagbo strengthens his defense team
5. U.S. Embassy support for school libraries
6. Details about the discovery of a mass grave in Port-Bouet
7. Roundtable for women parliamentarians organized by National Democratic Institute

1. ECOWAS Council to meet today in Abidjan

Fraternite Matin (p. 4) reports that the ECOWAS Council is meeting today in Abidjan to consider new sanctions to save the transitional government led by interim President Diacounda Traore.

Still on the resolution of the Malian crisis, **Soir Info (p. 3)** says that Diacounda Traore is seeking help from Ivorian President Alassane Ouattara. According to the report, Traore is counting on President Ouattara and ECOWAS to bring peace to his country.

2. Results of the Council of Ministers meeting

Fraternite Matin (p. 5) carries an account of the Council of Ministers meeting chaired by President Ouattara yesterday. In addition to announcing a reduction in the number of official government motorcades which frequently block traffic in Abidjan, the Council also discussed the planned return of the African Development Bank (ADB) to Abidjan.

3. Group of 21 gendarmes charged again

According to **Fraternite Matin (p. 6)**, 21 gendarmes recently released by a military court have been charged again with the same offenses by the military prosecutor. These officers, the newspaper reports, were arrested for alleged breach of state security as a result of shootings the night of October 15-16, 2011 at the Agban military camp in Abidjan.

4. Laurent Gbagbo strengthens his defense team

Fraternite Matin (p. 6) reports that "One month before the confirmation by the International Criminal Court of the charges against former president Laurent Gbagbo, his defense team was reinforced by the addition of a new attorney," Natacha Faveau Ivanovic, a French lawyer.

Soir Info (P. 4) reports on the upcoming hearing regarding former Ivorian president Laurent Gbagbo's case, stating that the defense team of the former Ivorian president, led by Altit Emmanuel, wants more time to review the evidence before the hearing scheduled for June 18.

5. U.S. Embassy support for school libraries

Fraternite Matin (p. 14) carried an article on U.S. Embassy support for school libraries in Cote d'Ivoire. According to the president of the Haut Sassandra Region Librarians' Network, the "Rotating Library" project is meant to provide regional school libraries with books (in French and English), and a computer for students to use. The purpose is to promote reading among students.

6. Details about the discovery of a mass grave in Port-Bouet

L'Intelligent d'Abidjan (p. 4) reports on a mass grave discovered in the Abidjan suburb of Port-Bouet. On May 15 and 16, four bodies were exhumed. According to prosecutor Allah Kouame, the investigation at the site will continue.

Le Patriote (P. 2) carries a story on mass grave discovery saying that "one more body was exhumed on Wednesday." The article goes on to say that the human bones were discovered not far from the Port-Bouet university campus.

7. Roundtable for women parliamentarians organized by National Democratic Institute

"Women parliamentarians call for help" according to an article in **Nord-Sud Quotidien (p. 5)**. The newspaper reports on a roundtable discussion organized by the National Democratic Institute (NDI), an American NGO promoting democracy, to reinforce Ivorian women parliamentarians and NGO leaders' participation in conflict resolution and the peace process.

MAY 16, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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1. Reports say former Ivorian president has money in bank accounts
2. Lack of money delays reintegration of former combatants
3. Twenty-one gendarmes to face trial for alleged breach of state security
4. New Air Cote d'Ivoire to take off in July
5. Opening of the first Borderless conference on "Transforming Trade"

1. Reports say former Ivorian president has money in bank accounts

Le Nouveau Reveil (p. 1) carries a prominent story alleging that "more than 700 million FCFA (about US \$1.3 million) has been discovered in a bank account belonging to Gbagbo." According to the article **(p. 3)**, the money has been found in an account located in a bank in Cote d'Ivoire. The paper,

which attributes this information to Jeune Afrique, a French news magazine, suggests that this revelation contradicts claims by former president Laurent Gbagbo that he had no money to pay his lawyers as he stands trial at The Hague in connection with crimes allegedly committed during post-election violence last year in Cote d'Ivoire.

"Gbagbo has lied to the International Criminal Court," reads a banner headline in **Le Patriote (p. 1)**, while **Le Nouveau Courrier (p. 1)** describes Jeune Afrique's story as "a fabrication." The article (**p. 5**) claims that the bank account the French newspaper was referring to has been frozen and goes on to suggest that if the account owner cannot have access to his account then he can call himself a poor man.

The former Ivorian leader is also the subject of front-page story in **Nord-Sud Quotidien** which predicts that Gbagbo has no chance to walk out of the court a free man as he is set to appear for the second time before the ICC on June 18. The paper (**p. 4**) also announces that victims of the 2010-2011 post-election violence that killed 3,000 persons are planning to stage a demonstration in Abidjan a few days before Gbagbo appears in court.

Meanwhile, a front-page story in **Soir Info** quotes Gbagbo's lawyer who was full of optimism ahead of the June 18 hearing. "Things are moving rather well," the paper (**p. 3**) quotes the lawyer as saying.

With a prominent photo of Gbagbo on its front page, **L'Intelligent d'Abidjan** claims that the former Ivorian strongman is still "ruling" Cote d'Ivoire. To justify its assertion, the paper (**p. 7**) notes that the deeds and alleged misdeeds of the former president and his FPI party seem to be the major subjects of concern of the government, which seems to have lost focus on its reconciliation program.

2. Lack of money delays reintegration of former combatants

"There is no money to complete the reinsertion of the ex-combatants," a front-page headline in **Fraternite Matin** quotes the coordinator of the National Reintegration Program (PNRRC) as saying. Daniel Ouattara, who was speaking to the paper (**p. 7**), disclosed that the budget for the reintegration program is estimated at 3 billion FCFA (about US \$5.8 million) and this money is supposed to be paid by the government. The head of the reintegration program further explained the program has been delayed because the funds provided by the government are insufficient.

3. Twenty-one gendarmes to face trial for alleged breach of state security

Some 21 gendarmes, who were released recently after being tried and acquitted by a military court for alleged breach of state security, will re-appear before the same court today, reports **Fraternite Matin (p. 8)**. The report also quotes the lawyers of the accused as saying that they do not know the reason behind this decision.

4. New Air Cote d'Ivoire to take off in July

"Air Cote d'Ivoire to take off in late July," says a front-page headline in **Fraternite Matin**. A report in this paper (**p. 14**) says that an agreement was signed yesterday between Ivorian authorities and the shareholders.

5. Opening of the first Borderless conference on "Transforming Trade"

"The Borderless campaign has led to real improvements although trade and transport still need to improve in the region," a report carried by the state news agency **AIP** quotes Ambassador Phillip

Carter III as saying yesterday during the opening ceremony of the first Borderless conference on "Transforming Trade." Speaking at the same ceremony, Ivorian Minister of Transport Gaoussou Toure stressed that measures are to be put in place in order "to facilitate the free movement of people and goods," reports **L'Inter (p. 11)**.

NOTE: There will be no press review on May 17, 2012 which is an official holiday in Cote d'Ivoire.

MAY 15, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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1. American-Ivorian bilateral relations the topic of a meeting between the Ivorian Prime Minister and the U.S. Deputy Director of Commerce in charge of Africa
2. Opening of the first Borderless conference on "Transforming Trade"
3. National Assembly holds its first meeting
4. Ivorian First Lady's efforts to curb child labor in Cote d'Ivoire

1. American-Ivorian bilateral relations the topic of a meeting between the Ivorian Prime Minister and the U.S. Deputy Director of Commerce in charge of Africa

State-owned television station **RTI1** yesterday carried footage of the U.S. Deputy Director of Commerce in charge of Africa, Florizelle B. Liser, holding talks with Prime Minister Jeannot Ahoussou Kouadio. The report said that bilateral cooperation between the United States and Cote d'Ivoire, especially the restoration of Cote d'Ivoire's eligibility for AGOA and its impact on the national economy was on the top of the agenda during the meeting between the Prime Minister and Ms. Liser, who was accompanied by Ambassador Phillip Carter III. "The United States has the biggest economy worldwide representing about US \$14 trillion. Now that Cote d'Ivoire has joined AGOA, Cote d'Ivoire has the capacity and the potential to trade with this huge market in terms of exports," the report quoted Ms. Liser as saying to reporters.

Reporting on Ms. Liser's meeting with Prime Minister Ahoussou Kouadio, **Le Nouveau Reveil (p. 4)** quotes the U.S. Deputy Director of Commerce in charge of Africa as saying that "We've congratulated the government on the return of peace which is a key to economic growth. Our contribution consists of helping Cote d'Ivoire export its products to the sub-region as well as to the whole world such as Brazil and India. We're optimistic that Cote d'Ivoire has the potential to do that."

A report in **Fraternite Matin (p. 11)** says that the U.S. Deputy Director of Commerce in charge of Africa, who is also the AGOA commissioner, noted "positive progress" in Cote d'Ivoire's political environment. Ms. Liser said this after a meeting with officials of APEX-CI, the organization that has worked to secure Cote d'Ivoire's eligibility for AGOA, reports the paper. She is also reported as saying

that this positive environment will help create business opportunities and enable Cote d'Ivoire to profit from AGOA.

Meanwhile, an article in **Notre Voie (p. 10)** claims that businessmen in Cote d'Ivoire have deplored an environment that does not create good conditions to do business. According to the paper, they made this known yesterday during a meeting with the U.S. Deputy Director of Commerce in charge of Africa. The paper quotes a businesswoman saying that efforts must be deployed to make Ivorian justice more "credible" in order to create an environment conducive for trade and investment.

2. Opening of the first Borderless conference on "Transforming Trade"

A report carried by the Ivorian news agency **AIP** says that Ambassador Phillip Carter III is to launch today the first Borderless conference that focuses on the topic "Transforming Trade." The article also says that the conference, organized by the Borderless Alliance with the support of USAID's West Africa Trade Hub, is to enable leading private sector stakeholders from across the region to find solutions to increase trade in West Africa. Stakeholders will discuss regional integration strategies, regional trade and investment opportunities and the achievements across the region in 2011 during the two-day event, the report quotes as a statement issued by the U.S. Embassy as saying. A report in **Nord-Sud Quotidien (p. 7)** says that about 200 stakeholders from the West Africa region are expected to attend the Borderless conference. A day before the conference, a delegation from the Borderless Alliance visited the Port of Abidjan.

3. National Assembly holds its first meeting

The bureau of the National Assembly held its first meeting yesterday in Abidjan under the chairmanship of Speaker Guillaume Soro to outline programs to be carried out in the coming three months, reports **L'Inter (p. 3)**. According to the paper, the speaker used the opportunity to reaffirm his commitment to build a "modern" National Assembly.

Meanwhile, a prominent headline in **Soir Info (p. 1)** says that the MPs are demanding the payment of their salaries. The report **(p. 3)** quotes an aide to the Speaker as saying that "The National Assembly does not yet have a budget; the Speaker is currently working with the President of the Republic to resolve this problem." "The MPs will get paid as from today," says a front-page headline in **Nord-Sud Quotidien**. An article in this paper **(p. 3)** says that the problems which have delayed the payments have been resolved.

4. Ivorian First Lady's efforts to curb child labor in Cote d'Ivoire

A front-page report in **L'Expression** says that Ivorian First Lady Dominique Ouattara's personal involvement in efforts aimed at curbing child labor in Cote d'Ivoire has saved the country from international sanctions. The article **(p. 6)** suggests that for the first time Cote d'Ivoire has been able to adopt a national action plan against child labor with the support of national and international organizations as well as the U.S. Embassy in Abidjan.

MAY 14, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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1. American-Ivorian bilateral relations
2. Rumors of coup d'état and the security situation in Cote d'Ivoire
3. Alleged mass graves uncovered on a university campus in Abidjan
4. Government forces accused of torturing detainees
5. The weight and the future of the Ivorian opposition

1. American-Ivorian bilateral relations

Many Ivorian newspapers, including ***Fraternite Matin* (p. 5)**, reported over the weekend on the recent visit of the American High Speed Vessel *Swift* (HSV 2) to Abidjan. The report said that the focus of the visit was on enhancing relationships with regional maritime partners. "This cooperation is critical for U.S. Naval Forces in Africa," the paper quoted Djakaridja Kone, the commander of the Ivorian Navy, as saying. "After the French vessel, an American warship in Ivorian waters," said a banner headline in ***L'Inter* (p. 1)**.

The recent visit of Deputy Secretary of the Treasury Neal S. Wolin to Cote d'Ivoire is the subject of a prominent article in today's issue of ***Fraternite Matin* (p. 11)**. The report highlights the deputy secretary's visit to a mangrove reforestation project in Bingerville located on the outskirts of Abidjan.

Another report in ***Fraternite Matin* (p. 13)** says that the U.S. Deputy Director of Commerce in charge of Africa, Florizelle B. Liser, is currently on a visit to Cote d'Ivoire. According to the paper, economic issues, especially AGOA, will be on the top of the agenda during Ms. Liser's visit. The report also says that Ms. Liser and her delegation will be meeting today with the head of APEX-CI, the organization that has worked to secure Cote d'Ivoire's eligibility for AGOA.

In another development, a report in ***Le Quotidien d'Abidjan* (p. 6)** says that English teachers from West African Francophone countries were trained last week during a seminar organized by the British Council with the partnership of the U.S. Embassy in Abidjan. Still on education, a brief report in the weekend issue of ***L'Intelligent d'Abidjan* (p. 3)** said that the American government has invited an Ivorian to the United States as part of its International Visitor program. The report said that the visit of Mrs. Yao N'Guessan Kouakou, the coordinator of the women's wing of Amnesty International in Cote d'Ivoire, will focus on the issue of leadership.

ONUFI FM, the UN radio station in Cote d'Ivoire, carried today the voice of U.S. Embassy Information Officer Grant Phillipp speaking on the U.S. Embassy's rotating library program. Phillipp, who was speaking in Odienné, said that the program is aimed at providing books to students and supporting the education program in Cote d'Ivoire.

2. Rumors of coup d'état and the security situation in Cote d'Ivoire

"Are pro-Soro supporters trying to destabilize Ouattara with the complicity of the FPI?" asks a prominent front page headline in today's issue of **Le Nouveau Reveil**. The paper (**p. 4**) comments that the party of former Ivorian leader Laurent Gbagbo has "no respect" for the authorities in power and is always in a "defiant" posture. The commentator claims that "pro-FPI hardliners" in the army continue "to sabotage" government plans. Along with this situation, the commentary says, the government is yet to come to terms with ex-combatants who, it says, are involved in "armed robbery." "Is the disarmament a hoax?" asks another front-page headline in this paper which quotes the prefect of the northern town of Sinematiali as saying, "former fighters are still armed," and another official in this region as saying, "80 percent of the armed gangs manning illegal roadblocks are disbanded soldiers."

A report in **Fraternite Matin** (**p. 5**) says that the Minister in charge of Defense, Paul Koffi Koffi, recently made an unexpected tour of certain areas in Abidjan following continuous rumors about plans to destabilize the government of Cote d'Ivoire. The visit, the paper says, was to enable the minister to see for himself the security situation on the ground.

In a related development, a report on the same page of the paper says that Cote d'Ivoire and Liberia have reinforced security along their common border. According to the paper, military commanders meeting in Cote d'Ivoire have hammered out a security blueprint that includes the deployment of troops on each side of the frontier of the two countries. Meanwhile, a report in this paper (**p. 4**) says that at least four persons – including a government soldier – were killed in the western town of Bangolo following fighting between government forces and armed gangs.

3. Alleged mass graves uncovered on a university campus in Abidjan

A front page headline in **Nord-Sud Quotidien** suggests that three mass graves have been uncovered on a university campus in Abidjan. According to the paper the graves were discovered by government forces.

4. Government forces accused of torturing detainees

A prominent report in the weekend issue of **Notre Voie** (**p. 2**) claimed that government forces have tortured detainees in a camp located in the Abidjan neighborhood of Yopougon, reputed to be the stronghold of the opposition FPI party. The article also quoted alleged victims who complained about "torture, abuse and human rights violations" that they allegedly suffered in the hands of the government forces. "When they sent us to this camp, they plunged our heads in buckets full of water in an attempt to suffocate us and to have us confess," the paper quoted one of the alleged victims as saying.

5. The weight and the future of the Ivorian opposition

"The FPI denounces violations of freedom of speech," says a front-page headline in today's issue of **Notre Voie**. The paper attributes this statement to the party's officials who were speaking over the weekend during a public conference.

Meanwhile, **Fraternite Matin** devotes its front page to wondering "How powerful is the Ivorian opposition today?" Another prominent headline in this paper suggests that almost a year after the new government took the reins of power in Cote d'Ivoire, some cadres of the opposition are still in exile, some still have their assets frozen, some are engaged in infighting, while some have chosen to cross

the carpet. Regarding the former ruling FPI, the paper (**p. 3**) suggests that the party of former president Gbagbo is yet to find a leader.

May 11, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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1. Ivorian authorities tighten security measures
2. The UN Security Council to carry out a fact-finding mission in Cote d'Ivoire
3. The chairman of the reconciliation body calls on the press to support the process
4. Media professionals discuss the emergence of new media

1. Ivorian authorities tighten security measures

According to a report in **L'Inter (p. 4)** Ivorian authorities have decided to tighten security measures along the country's border with Liberia. The information, the paper said, has been provided by the Ivorian Minister in charge of Defense, Paul Koffi Koffi who addressed the issue in the course of an interview with the UN radio channel ONUCI FM. According to Mr. Koffi, a joint security plan has been elaborated with Liberian authorities in a bid to efficiently monitor security in this area. The plan, he added, is being implemented with 900 military personnel stationed along the country's western border. It also includes close cooperation between the two UN missions in Cote d'Ivoire and in Liberia. This announcement, the paper said, came after a deadly assault by unidentified gunmen last month caused mayhem in the forested Tai region.

On the margin of this interview, Mr. Koffi also announced measures put in place to ensure security in the country's main detention facilities where multiple escapes have been reported recently. Thus, he said, military staff will be dispatched to these prisons to support guards.

Still on security, the paper noted in a separate development that the proliferation of weapons still poses a real security challenge. The paper noted that according to the COMNAT-ALPC, a government-sponsored body tasked with fighting this phenomenon, efforts are still needed to address the issue of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR).

Le Quotiden d'Abidjan (p. 5) carried a similar account, adding that a workshop sponsored by the UN Mission in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI) and designed to build the capacity of journalists on the DDR process was recently held at the mission Abidjan headquarters.

With more on security issue, an article in **L'Intelligent d'Abidjan (p. 3)** noted that an important security operation was carried out yesterday by Ivorian law enforcement agents in the Abidjan neighborhood of Yopougon. According to the daily, the operation included mobile visibility patrols of heavily armed army and police staff.

This maneuver is however criticized by **Le Temps (p. 4)** which noted that the Ouattara administration is in fear after the defeat of its major supporter - French President Nicolas Sarkozy. The paper also noted that a French warship identified as *Tonnerre* is reported in the Ivorian waters. Citing insiders,

the paper argued that the ship is in Cote d'Ivoire to carry out joint military exercises with the French Licorne forces.

2. The UN Security Council to carry out a fact-finding mission in Cote d'Ivoire

According to ***L'Inter* (p. 5)** the UN Security Council is to send a mission to assess achievements made in Cote over the recent months. The announcement was made on the UN radio channel ONUCI FM according to the daily, which added that the fact-finding mission aims at assessing progress made in the restructurization of the security system, the DDR process and the rule of law.

The visit was also on the agenda of a meeting between the Ivorian Premier Jeannot Ahoussou-Kouadio and the UN Deputy Envoy in Cote d'Ivoire Arnould Akodjenou according to ***L'Intelligent d'Abidjan* (p. 7)**. The daily argued that the visit is a follow-up to a report in late march suggesting a partial lifting of the arms embargo imposed on Cote d'Ivoire.

3. The chairman of the reconciliation body calls on the press to support the process

According to Mr. Charles Konan Banny, the chairman of the Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CDVR) media professionals have a role to play in the reconciliation process. According to ***Fraternite matin* (p. 4)** Mr. Banny made the announcement as he was meeting with political actors, including the President of UDCY Mel Theodore and veteran political figure Laurent Dona Fologo. "Reconciliation is a must...we have no other option," he said before calling on the media to understand the issue as "a mission of national interest."

4 Media professionals discuss the emergence of new media

Still on the press, ***L'Intelligent d'Abidjan* (p. 2)** noted that media professionals recently met to discuss the role of the press in a changing world. On, the occasion, the paper said, Mr. Zio Moussa, the president of the Ivorian Organization for Press Freedom (OLPED) calls on journalists to report responsibly and avoid inflamed rhetoric. He noted that that like journalists being tried for fueling the Rwandan genocide, Ivorian media professionals could face similar charges.

MAY 10, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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1. Jail break in Cote d'Ivoire: Government fires prison guards
2. Government sets up panel to control prices of food commodities
3. Women met to postmortem the performance of female candidates in the last parliamentary elections
4. British Minister for Africa speaks on reconciliation process in Cote d'Ivoire
5. English teaching seminar underway in Abidjan
6. President Ouattara met with his Nigerian counterpart over the crises in Guinea-Bissau and Mali

1. Jail break in Cote d'Ivoire: Government fires prison guards

A front-page headline in **Fraternite Matin** says that the government has sacked two prison guards following a series of jail breaks in Cote d'Ivoire. According to the paper (**p. 5**), the decision was announced yesterday after a cabinet meeting presided over by President Alassane Ouattara. The report also quotes the spokesperson as saying that 240 inmates have recently escaped from eight prisons across the country. He also reportedly blamed last week's jail break in Abidjan on "certain dysfunctions," adding that "the lack of arms and insufficient guards tasked with monitoring security at the prisons cannot be used as an excuse."

"Ouattara fires two prison guards and warns his ministers," says a banner headline that runs across **L'Inter (p. 1)**, while another banner headline in **Le Patriote (p. 1)** reads: "Ouattara brandishes zero tolerance." An article in this paper (**p. 3**) suggests that the time for negligence, defiance, corruption, and treachery in public administration is over. "All the ministers have been instructed to exercise extreme rigor when evaluating tasks that they assign to their collaborators," the paper quotes the banner headline as saying at yesterday's press briefing.

2. Government sets up panel to control prices of food commodities

According to **Fraternite Matin (p. 4)**, the government has set a panel tasked with controlling the prices of food commodities in the local market. The decision, the paper says, was taken at a cabinet meeting yesterday and was aimed at reducing food prices in Cote d'Ivoire. Meanwhile, another report in this paper (**p. 18**) says that the prices of food commodities have yet to decrease despite government's efforts.

3. Women met to postmortem the performance of female candidates in the last parliamentary elections

A report in **L'Intelligent d'Abidjan (p. 6)** says that Ivorian women have gathered recently to postmortem the performance of female candidates in the last parliamentary elections and to hammer out strategies aimed at increasing the number of women elected in the coming municipal and regional elections. According to the report, the conference was organized by Playdoo-Cote d'Ivoire, an NGO, and brought together 25 women who discussed ways to improve female candidates' poor performance during the parliamentary elections. The report notes that out of 137 female candidates, only 28 were elected, representing 11 percent of women represented in the current National Assembly.

4. British Minister for Africa speaks on the reconciliation process in Cote d'Ivoire

"Justice and reconciliation are vital for Cote d'Ivoire," **Soir Info (p. 4)** quotes British Minister for Africa, Henry Bellingham, as saying. According to the paper, Bellingham was speaking Tuesday in Abidjan at a ceremony marking the reopening of the British Embassy, which was closed almost seven years ago as a result of political unrest in Cote d'Ivoire.

5. English teaching seminar underway in Abidjan

Fraternite Matin (p. 9) reports on an English teaching seminar underway in Abidjan. Dubbed, "English Teachers' Association Symposium", the training is jointly organized by the British Council and the U.S. Department's regional office for English programs. The week-long training, which began on Monday, has brought together participants from Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Guinea (Conakry), Mali, Mauritania, Gabon, Cameroon, Benin, Togo, Niger and Senegal.

6. President Ouattara met with his Nigerian counterpart over the crises in Guinea-Bissau and Mali

According to a report in *Fraternite Matin* (p. 6), President Ouattara and his Nigerian counterpart, Goodluck Jonathan, have decided to send a mission to Guinea-Bissau and Mali in an attempt to help resolve the crisis unfolding in the two West African countries. The decision was taken yesterday in Abidjan after a meeting between the two leaders, reports the paper.

MAY 9, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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1. The visit of the U.S. Deputy Secretary of Treasury to Cote d'Ivoire
2. Push for Cote d'Ivoire's MCC eligibility
3. U.S. Embassy's reaction to a controversy over PEPFAR bidding procedure
4. Debate on French-Ivorian relations after Sunday's presidential election in France
5. President Ouattara vows to punish guards after Friday's jail break in Abidjan
6. The impact of racketeering on Cote d'Ivoire's economy
7. Nigerian president expected in Abidjan today to hold talks with his Ivorian counterpart on the crisis in Guinea-Bissau
8. UK embassy reopens in Abidjan

1. The visit of the U.S. Deputy Secretary of Treasury to Cote d'Ivoire

L'Inter (p. 10) reports on a visit of the Deputy Secretary of Treasury, Neal S. Wolin, to a mangrove reforestation project in Bingerville located on the outskirts of Abidjan. The project, the report says, is financed by the Global Environment Facility through the UNDP. "The USG is pleased to support such projects," the paper quotes Mr. Wolin as saying.

2. Push for Cote d'Ivoire's MCC eligibility

A front-page headline in *Le Patriote* suggests that the eligibility of Cote d'Ivoire for the MCC would inject some 400 billion FCFA (about US \$800 million) into the country's economy. According to the paper (p. 3), this was revealed recently at a seminar organized by the government to review the country's development plans.

3. U.S. Embassy's reaction to a controversy over PEPFAR bidding procedure

An article in *Soir Info* (p. 9) quotes the director of a medical company accusing PEPFAR staff of having subverted Ministry of Health procurement procedures. A separate article on the same page quotes PAO Jonathan Cebra as explaining: "The document that you have provided is an internal Embassy procurement document, unrelated to the procurement processes of the Government of Cote d'Ivoire. ... The procurement process in question was competed."

4. Debate on French-Ivorian relations after Sunday's presidential election in France

"France-Cote d'Ivoire: Nothing has changed," a front-page headline in **Fraternite Matin** quotes President Ouattara as saying. The president was speaking yesterday in Abidjan upon return from Paris after a week-long private visit to France. Another front-page headline says that the president used the occasion to reaffirm the "long relationship" between France and Cote d'Ivoire. "The relation between France and Cote d'Ivoire is very strong and historic... the change of president will not change this excellent relation," the president told reporters.

5. President Ouattara vows to punish guards after Friday's jail break in Abidjan

On home issues, a prominent headline in **L'Inter (p. 1)** says that President Ouattara has vowed to punish guards after recent jail break from a prison in Abidjan. "What happened is totally unacceptable. I've decided to punish the culprits," the paper **(p. 3)** quotes the president as saying. "Ivorian must live in peace and security should be reinforced everywhere even in prisons," the president reportedly said. "Jail break in Agboville and Abidjan: The culprits to be punished," a front-page headline in **Fraternite Matin** quotes President Ouattara as saying. In a related development, a report in **Le Patriote (p. 5)** says that two guards were sentenced to a two-month imprisonment following a jail break in the northern town of Korhogo.

6. The impact of racketeering on Cote d'Ivoire's economy

A report in **Fraternite Matin (p. 7)** claims that racketeering and trade barriers cost Cote d'Ivoire's economy 350 billion FCFA (US \$ 700 million) every year. The article also says that in order to reverse the situation, Ivorian security commissioners have been engaged in an awareness campaign that targets both security forces and transporters.

7. Nigerian president expected in Abidjan today to hold talks with his Ivorian counterpart on the crisis in Guinea-Bissau

A front-page story in **Fraternite Matin** says that Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan is expected today in Abidjan to meet his Ivorian counterpart over the political stalemate in Guinea-Bissau. According to the paper, this was announced yesterday by President Ouattara at a press briefing.

8. UK embassy reopens in Abidjan

A report in **Le Patriote (p. 4)** announces that the UK Embassy in Abidjan has reopened, almost seven years after it was closed down due to political instability in Cote d'Ivoire.

MAY 8, 2012

Today's Top Stories

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1.U.S.-Cote d'Ivoire bilateral relations

2.Cote d'Ivoire set to achieve completion of IMF-backed debt relief initiative by the end of June

3. [World AIDS Orphans Day observed](#) in Cote d'Ivoire
4. The security situation in northern Cote d'Ivoire
5. The future of France-Cote d'Ivoire relations after Sunday's presidential election in France

1. U.S.-Cote d'Ivoire bilateral relations

Ivorian public television, RTI1, yesterday carried footage of the Deputy Secretary of Treasury, Neal S. Wolin, holding talks with Prime Minister Jeannot Ahoussou Kouadio in Abidjan. According to the report, issues including partnership between the United States and Cote d'Ivoire were high on the agenda during the meeting between the prime minister and Mr. Wolin who was accompanied by Ambassador Phillip Carter III. The Deputy Secretary of Treasury underscored Cote d'Ivoire's economic potential despite the recent political crisis, the report says. "Cote d'Ivoire is making important progress and is nearing the achievement of the Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) scheme," Mr. Wolin is reported as saying.

"The United States are set to be a very strong partner for Cote d'Ivoire in every domain," **Le Nouveau Reveil (p. 6)** quotes the Deputy Secretary of Treasury as saying after his meeting yesterday with the Mr. Ahoussou Kouadio.

2. Cote d'Ivoire set to achieve completion of IMF-backed debt relief initiative by the end of June

"Cote d'Ivoire is on track to achieve completion of the IMF-backed Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) scheme by the end of June," says a front-page headline in **L'Intelligent d'Abidjan**. According to the paper (**p. 4**), this was stated yesterday by World Bank Director in Cote d'Ivoire Madani Tall after a meeting with Prime Minister Jeannot Ahoussou Kouadio. "We talked about the achievement of the HIPC debt relief initiative. The World Bank's board of directors is set to work on the achievement of the HIPC on June 26, 2012; while the International Monetary Fund is set to do the same thing on June 25, 2012," Mr. Tall is reported as saying.

3. [World AIDS Orphans Day observed](#) in Cote d'Ivoire

Ivorian public television, RTI1, yesterday carried footage of the Minister of Family, Women and Children, Raymonde Coffie Goudou, visiting AIDS orphans centers to mark the celebration of the World AIDS Orphans Day. The visit, the report said, was to enable the minister to assess the situation of orphans, vulnerable children and women affected by the disease. The visit, the minister said, is "to see firsthand how these children are being treated and to show the government's support."

Reporting on the same event, **Fraternite Matin (p. 8)** says that the Minister of Family, Women and Children calls for the respect of children's rights in Cote d'Ivoire. "The impact of AIDS on children is a challenge that our country must quickly face," the paper quotes Mrs Coffie Goudou as saying.

4. The security situation in northern Cote d'Ivoire

"80 per cent of armed robbers here are former combatants," says a prominent headline in **Le Nouveau Reveil (p. 1)**. The paper (**p. 5**) attributes this statement to the Prefect of the northern town of Ferkessedougou. The paper also quotes the head of the national program for the

reintegration of the former combatants, Daniel K. Ouattara, who expressed concerns about “the consequence of this situation.”

5. The future of France-Cote d’Ivoire relations after Sunday’s presidential election in France

The future of France-Cote d’Ivoire relations after Sunday’s presidential election in France which saw the victory of the candidate of France’s socialist party, Francois Hollande, is the subject of front-page stories in may Ivorian dailies. “Cote d’Ivoire is the friend of all and nobody’s enemy,” says a banner headline in **Fraternite Matin (p. 1)**. Another front-page headline says that President Alassane Ouattara, who is currently on a private visit to France, yesterday met with the outgoing President Nicolas Sarkozy and congratulated Mr. Hollande for his election in Sunday’s presidential runoff.

“Handicapped by the defeat of his sponsor, Ouattara is seeking support in France,” says a prominent headline **Le Nouveau Courrier (p. 1)**; while a front-page headline in **Notre Voie** describes the meeting between President Ouattara and France’s outgoing president as “awkward.” “I’ll work with President Ouattara,” a front-page headline in **Le Nouveau Reveil** quotes Mr. Hollande having said a few months ago.

May 2, 2012

Today’s Top Stories

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1. Ivorian PM calls for social stability as labor unions denounce the high cost of living
2. State-run media professionals trained by U.S. journalism expert
3. U.S. Senators tour the Ivorian Blood Transfusion Center
4. 14 dead in clashes between army factions in Mali

1. Ivorian PM calls for social stability as labor unions denounce the high cost of living

Like in most countries, Labor Day was celebrated yesterday in Cote d’Ivoire. The event, highlighted by a meeting between Ivorian Premier Jeannot Ahoussou Kouadio and representatives from the country’s major workers’ unions, was a subject of banner headlines in today’s press. **Fraternite Matin (pp. 2-4)** noted that the occasion was used as a platform by the unions to depict the rather grim situation of the Ivorian workers and the challenges posed by the country’s 44 percent unemployment rate. In his address, the paper said, Prime Minister Ahoussou committed the government to addressing these issues, arguing that only dialogue can pave the way for sustainable solutions.

Still on the issue, **L’Intelligent d’Abidjan (p. 7)** noted that the Ivorian Premier, on behalf of President Alassane Ouattara, pleaded for social stability in a bid to allow the government to successfully carry out its efforts to aid the country’s recovery. “The country is still struggling to recover and though your right to strike remains secure, you should, under the current circumstances, display restraint,” Mr. Ahoussou was reported as saying.

For opposition papers such as **Le Temps (p. 7)**, there was nothing but layoffs and unemployment to celebrate yesterday. The paper argued that President Ouattara's leadership is highlighted by massive dismissals and a decline in the buying power of workers, whose situation has become precarious.

Le Nouveau Courrier (p. 9) on its part noted that the Ivorian leader deliberately avoided facing the unions and left the country on the occasion.

2. State-run media professionals trained by U.S. journalism expert

A report in **L'Inter (p. 16)** noted that a workshop sponsored by the U.S. Embassy in Abidjan and designed for reporters and media professionals from the state-run Radio Television Ivoirienne (RTI) started Monday in Abidjan. Organized as part of the U.S. support to help build the capacity of Ivorian media professionals, the five-day session is being conducted by U.S. journalism expert Ronald Wimer. "This workshop is a real opportunity for us as we are committed to providing our customers with excellent programs," the paper reported RTI Director Lazare Aka Sayé as saying. On his part, U.S. Public Affairs Officer Jonathan Cebra said this session marks the beginning of a closer cooperation between the U.S. Embassy in Abidjan and RTI. Mr. Wimer, who said he has an in-depth knowledge of the African press, called on participants to actively participate in what he qualified as a forum for exchanging ideas, the paper added.

Nord Sud Quotidien (p. 11) carried a similar account.

3. U.S. Senators tour the Ivorian Blood Transfusion Center

According to an article in **Fraternite Matin (p. 7)** a delegation of U.S. Senators recently toured the Ivorian National Blood Transfusion Center (CNTS). The visit, the paper said, aimed at assessing achievements made thanks to the U.S. support for the Ivorian health care system. It was also an occasion for the senators, including Sen. Roger Wicker, Sen. Kent Conrad and Sen. Michael Enzi to see first-hand the impact of the United States Government investments, through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) to supply the country with safe blood and blood products. The delegation, the paper added, was welcomed upon its arrival by CNTS Director Dr. Konate Seidou who pleaded for the continued support of the U.S. government in the health sector.

4. 14 dead in clashes between army factions in Mali

At least 14 people were killed in clashes between elements said to be close to deposed Malian leader Amadou Toumani Toure and soldiers from the ruling military junta in Mali. The information was reported by **Fraternite Matin (p. 24)** which noted that several areas, including the airport and the state broadcaster building held by the junta were attacked Monday during the assault. According to the junta leader, Cpt. Mamadou Sanogo, elements from abroad, supported by forces within the country, carried out these attacks. He said his forces are still in control of the situation, the paper added.

Media affiliation and circulation

Fraternite Matin	State-owned daily newspaper	23,000
L'Intelligent d'Abidjan	Privately-owned daily, leans pro-President Alassane Ouattara	7,000
L'Inter	Independent daily	20,000
Nord-Sud Quotidien	Daily close to Prime Minister Guillaume Soro	10,000
Notre Voie	Daily close to the FPI, the party of Former President Laurent Gbagbo	15,000
Le Nouveau Courrier	Daily close to the FPI, the party of Former President Laurent Gbagbo	10,000
Le Nouveau Reveil	Daily close to the PDCI-RDA, the party of Former President Henri Konan Bedie	17,000
Le Patriote	Daily close to the RDR, the party of President Alassane Ouattara	17,000
RTI TV	State broadcaster	
Soir Info	Independent daily	22,000
AIP	State News Agency	

NOTE: Newspaper circulation figures represent the number of copies printed, not actual sales.

DISCLAIMER

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